

TALLAPOOSA COUNTY

Honorable Clayton Kim Taylor

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Betty Carole Graham
Ted Little
Jimmy Abbett
Marsha Hanks
Jean Spicer
Frd Gray
Ginger Brannon
Mary Browning
Doris Harrell
Glen Mcgee
Tommy Bice
Ginger East
Antoinette Robinson
Annette McGrady
Angela Hill
Barbara Young
Bill Hough
Brett Pritchard
Carlyn Tucker-Simmons
Cathy Skarecky

Chuck Ledbetter
Cindy Railey
Dave Gallew
David Boleware
Jennifer Baker
Debra Easterwood
Doris Harrell
Eddie B. Tolbert
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James Orr
Janis Abney
Joe McClellan
Joe Paul Boone
John Ferguson
John Stephenson
Stanley Johnson
C.K. Taylor
Karen Coglean
Kenny Sherrer
Lonnie Harden
Luanne Wagner

Luanne White
Lynn Sides
Marilyn Lewis
Mary Browning
Melanie Sharpton
Peggy Bullard
Randal Willis
Raphelia Forbus
Renee Jackson
Robert Watson
Sandra Harris
Tammy Templeton
Terrell Haggerty
Tiffany Keel
Tim Birt
Tracey Guidry
Wayne Cowhick

Vista Volunteer: Mary Tremelling

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To remove barriers to improve access to healthcare.
2. Teen Pregnancy and Prevention
3. Addressing alcohol and drug issues

Issues

Issues are the primary concerns or problems facing children in the county.

Health - Children's (0 - 19) physical and mental well-being in the county.

Removing barriers to improve access to healthcare

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Promote awareness of children's insurance program to families/students enrolled in the local school system
- Pursue grant opportunities to provide technological advancements for identifying, monitoring and follow-up for students in need
- Provide information and assistance for obtaining health care insurance

Teen Pregnancy Prevention

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Supporting the implementation of teen pregnancy prevention programs in the school systems
- Assist with the compilation of data, evaluation of results, and possible publication for future recommendation (possible placements in county schools)
- Provide awareness through media and dissemination of facts and information (presentation during May 2006)

Safety - Children live free of abuse, neglect, crime, and drugs.

Violence and the Youth

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Assessment: Determine the main locations where bullies and violence take place within the community. This assessment is conducted through survey and county and city crime statistics along with school discipline statistics.
- Implementation: To lower youth violence we must initiate anti-violence curriculum within the schools and within the community concurrent with starting a youth crime watch
- Measurement: To determine the overall effectiveness of the Youth Against Violence program we must compare statistics annually

Alcohol Awareness

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Assessment: To assess we will gather data on juvenile crime statistics and check with pride survey results
- Implementation: there are several ways to implement this. One way is to have a DUI course for all Drivers Ed students. Another way would be to have different organizations within the community to speak out on its dangers
- Measurement: To measure we will gather data on juvenile crime statistics and check with pride survey results

School Safety

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Assessment: At this time all public schools are required to have a crisis manual. The assessment will determine if each school has a current updated crisis manual and a safety plan that covers 6 key areas, severe weather, intruder, fire, bomb/explosion, active shooters, and emergency contacts.
- Implementation: Update current crisis manual emergency contacts as well as current intruder, fire, bomb/explosion, and severe weather plans. Also make sure local law enforcement and schools are able to coordinate efforts
- Measurement: Conduct mock disaster drills

Education - Children

learn the skills necessary to become productive citizens.

Every child in Tallapoosa County has access to quality education

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Recommend the hiring of licensed social workers in the school systems
- Encourage school districts to enforce truancy laws
- Develop a Central Learning Center site within each community

Decrease the number of at-risk students in the County

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Work with schools to improve state ratings
- Involve parents more with their child's school activities
- Implement accountability strategies so parents can know students standing and class standing

Decrease Dropout Rate

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Decrease School dropout rate by 5%
- Implement an Advisory Board to work with the schools in helping all schools meet state standards
- Work with schools on dropout prevention strategies

Early Care and

Education - Children

(0 – 5) are provided opportunities to fully develop emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively and are ready to succeed.

Parental awareness of Early Care and Education needs of children ages 0-5

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Coordinate with Russell Medical Center to provide parenting classes before and after birth for new mothers and fathers
- Work through churches to have support groups for new parents
- Develop gift baskets for all new babies born in Tallapoosa County
- Implement "Book It" programs

Improve childcare accessibility and availability

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Encourage industries to have available day care on site
- Increase public awareness of quality childcare standards
- Encourage licensing of all day care centers
- Advocate the hiring of quality education providers in early education settings
- Work with the state school readiness program to enable the childcare centers to offer curricula that will prepare children for Kindergarten and 1st grade

Economic Security

- Children grow up in a financially stable home where the child's basic needs can be met.

Increasing County Job training and job placement

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Coordinate with the Community College for a countywide job fair
- Implement Career Day's in high schools
- Work with the Lake Martin Area Economic Development Alliance in bringing more employment in for young people
- Promote CACC's Technology programs through the schools

Parent Involvement

and Skills - Parents and guardians participation and effectiveness in fostering an environment for children to become mature, responsible and independent adults.

Increase parental knowledge of activities involving their children

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Newsletter once a quarter
- Media (newspaper, radio, and TV)
- Workshops
- Distribution of literature on subjects of interest throughout the year

Child Safety

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Provide safety classes for parents
- Work with the churches in providing workshops on safety for parents
- Work with the police department to provide instruction and infant seats for vehicles

Parental Accountability

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Newsletters
- Workshops
- Staying involved with the youth

Policy Recommendation

1. Increase funding for teen pregnancy programs at the local level.
2. Provide continued funding of insurance programs and benefits to children to ensure all children have access to adequate healthcare.
3. Implement Train-the-Trainer program for community leaders to work with youth and parents.
4. Implement Advisory Board to work with the schools in helping all schools meet state standards.
5. Encourage participation in after-school tutoring programs.
6. Hire a truancy officer.
7. Bring a parent or guardian and student together for a meeting when a student drops out of school or when a student's grades are failing.
8. Work with state agencies to develop and fund programs for youth training and employment.
9. Develop support groups for new parents.
10. Work with state school readiness programs to obtain standards for K-2nd grade.
11. Increase funding for quality parental development classes.

Accomplishments

September - The students at BRHS accepted the contract to research, write and produce a teen pregnancy video from their perspective. This was a nine weeks project. The results were outstanding. "It's Your Life" encourages students to carefully weigh the consequences of having sexual intercourse and to advocate a choice of abstinence. The crux of the video's message is that each student is responsible for the choices that he or she makes. In reference to sex, students must be made aware of the enormous responsibility that comes with teen pregnancy – for both the individual and society as a whole. "It's Your Life" advocates an abstinence-based approach to making decisions about sexual intercourse. This video has been shared across the state. This was accomplished through the Alabama Campaign for Teen Pregnancy Prevention Grant of \$ 2,000. Plus a grant from the BRHS Class of '57 of \$1,000.

James Orr, Chairman of the Safety Committee asked the Schools, and many community agencies joined the Safety Committee in planning the "Every 15 Minutes" Program for April, 2005. Across the nation, every 15 minutes a teenager is fatally injured in a drinking and driving accident. This was accomplished by a grant of \$1,500.

October – The Children's Policy Council is in the third year of partnering with the Tallapoosa County Schools for the Outreach Program with Auburn University. This program is for the juniors and seniors at Edward Bell School in Camp Hill. It is a tutoring program where graduate students at Auburn come to the school and work with the

juniors and seniors. Camp Hill is a community where many of the students have lost hope and through this program they are finding hope again. The Auburn students have gone the extra mile and have introduced the students to campus life. Through this effort

Some of the Edward Bell students have turned around and are now enrolled in college classes.

January – The Children's Policy Council hosted a "Premier Night" for the parents and Community Leaders at Benjamin Russell High School for the cast. Approximately 100 parents and city leaders attended. The sponsors were recognized - Alabama Campaign Against Teen Pregnancy for their \$2000. Grant and the Benjamin Russell Class of 1957 for their donation of \$1000. It was for this effort that Governor Bob Riley, gave the participating students and school a resolution of appreciation for a job well done.

February – The Tallapoosa County Children's Policy Council sponsored a grant writing workshop. Twenty five people attended the presentation led by Kris Vilamaa. Mary Tremelling, led a workshop in Colbert County and had 30 people present.

March – Mary Tremelling and Randy Willis attended the Unified Prevention System workshops to prepare for the Unified Prevention Grant Part 1 in April. We collaborated with Lee County and Auburn University in the application.

April – This is prom month and all the efforts of the planning committees for Every 15 Minutes is at hand. This program has involved approximately 100 people, including parents, teachers, First Responders, Police Officers, Emergency Room Personnel, MD.'s, Funeral Home, Counselors, Pastors, Fire Department Personnel, State Troopers, ABC, EMA's, and Pizza for the retreat, and many others. The program started on Monday and closed on Thursday when the entire high school viewed the video. Yes, it made an impact on the students and on that weekend there were no arrests by the Alexander City Police Department or the Tallapoosa County Sheriff's Department for drinking and driving.

Many of the students said they had no idea so much was involved when you drink and drive. Others told their teachers and school personnel, they would not promise not to drink but they would promise not to drink and drive. The AC Police Department reported no arrests for teens from the week of the Every 15 Minutes until an out of town teen was arrested in June, 2005 for DUI.

May – The Health Committee has applied for a "Covering Alabama Kids and Families" Grant

To enable the Alexander City School System implement a software program that will track the students health from kindergarten through high school.

June – The Alexander City School System has been in the process of implementing the Mendez "Too Good for Drugs and Violence" in the elementary grades. This is a kindergarten through middle school program And is a science-based program. It will be completely implemented by next fall.

The Needs Assessment for Tallapoosa County was completed and the final draft approved and sent to Montgomery. Each committee has chosen a project for this next year.

August- We have been awarded the "Covering Alabama Kids and Families" Grant. The \$2,500 will be used to purchase software in the School Nursing Departments for Jim Pearson, Stephens, and Radney Schools. We have signed the contract and waiting for the funds.